

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 FREETO 01299 241216Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-12 AGRE-00 AID-05 CEA-01  
CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DLOS-09 DODE-00  
DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 SOE-02 DOE-15 FMC-01 TRSE-00  
H-01 INR-10 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00  
NSC-05 NSF-01 OES-07 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05 SP-02  
SS-15 ICA-11 EUR-12 EA-10 DOEE-00 /168 W  
-----039306 241233Z /17

P R 241040Z APR 78

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7544

INFO AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L FREETOWN 1299

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIS, PLOS, PEPR, EWWT, MARR, MASS, PBOR, SL

SUBJECT: SIERRA LEONE OFFSHORE FISHING

REF: STATE 90967

1. RESPONSES ARE KEYED TO PARAGRAPH TWO OF REFTEL.  
A. FISHING IS IMPORTANT AS A SOURCE OF (1) INEXPENSIVE AND  
ABUNDANT PROTEIN, (2) PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EMPLOYMENT, AND  
(3) EXPORT EARNINGS. THE CATCH OF THE TRADITIONAL CANOE FISHERIES  
IS A PRINCIPAL INGREDIENT IN THE LOCAL DIET. THESE SMALL SCALE  
OPERATIONS SUPPLY THREE-FOURTHS OF AN ESTIMATE 50,000 TONS CONSUMED  
ANNUALLY. IN COASTAL RURAL DISTRICTS FISHING IS THE MOST IMPORT-  
ANT SINGLE OCCUPATION, WHILE PROCESSING AND DISTRIBUTION OF  
FRESH AND SMOKED FISH IS AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF SECONDARY  
EMPLOYMENT. THE SIERRA FISHING COMPANY PROVIDES FRESH FISH TO  
THE LOCAL MARKET AS WELL AS EXPORTS TO WEST COAST AFRICAN AND  
EUROPEAN NATIONS; A TAX IS LEVIED ON THESE EXPORTS. THE SIERRA  
FISHING COMPANY, AN ASSOCIATION OF COMPANIES, WAS FORMED IN  
1976 TO FACILITATE A TRIPARTITE FISHING OPERATION COMPOSED OF  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 FREETO 01299 241216Z

SOVRYBFLOT, A COMMERCIAL CORPORATION OF THE SOVIET MINISTRY  
OF FISHERIES, FRANSOV, A JOINT SOVIET FRENCH FISHING COMPANY,  
AND SHERRA FISHIN COMPANY. UNDER THE TERMS OF THE USSR-  
GOSL FISHING AGREEMENT UP TO FIFTY PERCENT OF THE CATCH  
MAY BE MADE AVAILABLE BY SIERRA FISHING COMPANY FOR LOCAL  
CONSUMPTION AT AGREED UPON PRICES. (REFTEL 76 FREETOWN 3325.)  
HOWEVER, EMBOFF ESTIMATES THAT LESS THAN 25 PERCENT OF THE

REPORTED SOVIET CATCH IS CONSUMED LOCALLY. SIERRA FISHING COMPANY'S PRICES ARE NOT COMPETITIVE WITH THOSE OF LOCAL FISHERMEN DURING THE DRY SEASON. (SIERRA FISHING COMPANY DOES HAVE A GOOD MARKET FOR FRESH FROZEN FISH IN INTERIOR CITIES, BUT THE LARGEST DEMAND IS FOR INEXPENSIVE SMOKED FISH SUPPLIED BY THE TRADITIONAL FISHING AND DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM.) THE NUMBER OF SOVRYBFLOT VESSELS PERMITTED BY THE ORIGINAL FISHING AGREEMENT WAS RECENTLY DOUBLED; 32 SOVIET VESSELS NOW LEGALLY PLY SIERRA

LEONEAN WATERS -- INCLUDED AMONG THESE ARE TWO SHRIMPING TRAWLERS AND A RESEARCH VESSEL. THE SOVIET MINISTRY OF FISHERIES REPRESENTATIVE REPORTED A CATCH OF 10,822 TONS (EXCLUDING SHRIMP) PLUS 3,140 INEDIBLE FISH FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 1977 (144 FISHING DAYS). POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS AS RELATED TO SOVIET COMPLIANCE WITH THE FISHING AGREEMENT AND DEPLETION OF NATURAL RESOURCES ARE DISCUSSED BELOW.

B. SIERRA LEONEAN WATERS ARE CONSIDERED RICH IN A NUMBER OF SPECIES OF FISH AND SHRIMP. THE INCREASE IN THE SOVIET FISHING FLEET AND A NEW AGREEMENT WITH MESURADO FISHING COMPANY OF LIBERIA FOR THE PROVISION OF 12 SHRIMP TRAWLERS TEND TO CONFIRM THE POTENTIAL VALUE OF OFFSHORE FISHING. A SURVEY OF SHRIMP STOCKS CONDUCTED ABOARD SOVIET VESSELS BY THE LOCAL INSTITUTE OF MARINE BIOLOGY AND OCEANOGRAPHY CONCLUDED THAT AN INSHORE SHRIMPING FLEET OF UP TO 30 TRAWLERS COULD BE SUSTAINED.  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 FREETO 01299 241216Z

C. THE BILATERAL FISHING AGREEMENT WITH THE USSR ACCOUNTS FOR THE BULK OF THE LEGALIZED INDUSTRIAL FISHING. ENFORCEMENT OF FISHERIES MANAGEMENT MEASURES IS IMPOSSIBLE DUE TO THE DIVISION OF FISHERIES' LACK OF EQUIPMENT AND THE SOVIET'S SOPHISTICATED METHODS OF CONCEALING ILLEGAL PRACTICES. A RECENT DANISH CONCESSIONAL ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR THE ACQUISITION OF A RESEARCH VESSEL WHICH COULD IMPROVE ENFORCEMENT MEASURES AND REDUCE RELIANCE UPON THE SOVIETS FOR SURVEY OF STOCKS AND RESEARCH.

D. SIERRA LEONE IS INCAPABLE OF ENFORCING ITS FISHING LAWS. THE NATION HAS LESS ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY THAN ITS POORER NEIGHBOR GUINEA OR TINY GAMBIA. TWO USED PATROL BOATS PROVIDED BY THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT SELDOM SAIL BEYOND THE SHORELINE; LACK OF SKILLED PERSONNEL AND CORRUPTION ARE ADDITIONAL CONSTRAINTS TO EFFECTIVE POLICING. THE MOST RECENT SEIZURE WAS MADE BY THE SECURITY FORCES USING A BORROWED MOTOR LAUNCH RATHER THAN BY PATROL BOATS AND THEIR CREWS. WIDESPREAD POACHING, EVEN WITHIN FIFTY MILES OF LAND, IS REDUCING LONG TERM FISHING RESOURCE AND POTENTIAL REVENUES FROM LICENSED VESSELS.

E. THE USSR AND LIBERIA ARE PRINCIPAL POACHERS AS WELL AS THE PRINCIPAL NATIONS FISHING WITH CONSENT OF THE GOVERNMENT. THE SOVIETS VIOLATE THEIR AGREEMENT BY UNDER REPORTING, TRANSSHIPPING AND EMPLOYING ILLEGAL FISHING METHODS. A NEW AGREEMENT BETWEEN SIERRA FISHING COMPANY AND THE MESURADO FISHING COMPANY MAY REDUCE POACHING BY LIBERIAN VESSELS.

F. SIERRA LEONE CLAIMS A 200-MILE LIMIT.

G. NO POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES HAVE ARISEN FROM SIEZURES DUE TO THE LIMITED NUMBER AND CUSTOMARY REDUCTION OF AUTHORIZED FINES. POTENTIAL FOR POLITICAL DISPUTES WITH THE SOVIETS EXIST AS THE NATION IMPROVES ITS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 FREETO 01299 241216Z

ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY. DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PRBAEBT AGREEMENT APPEARS TO BE LIMITED TO THE DIVISION OF FISHERIES AS INFLUENTIAL GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESSMEN BENEFIT FROM THE SIERRA FISHING COMPANY-SOVIET ARRANGEMENT.

2. SIERRA LEONE WOULD PREFER TO HAVE ITS OWN ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY, EVEN THOUGH LIMITED. ROOM EXISTS, HOWEVER, FOR COOPERATION WITH OTHER NATIONS IN SHARING OF INFORMATION AND AIR PATROLS. POTENTIAL FOR COOPERATION WOULD MOST LIKELY EXIST BETWEEN SIERRA LEONE AND LIBERIA WHICH UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE MANO RIVER UNION ARE ATTEMPTING TO FURTHER JOINT DEVELOPMENT.  
LINEHAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY ASSISTANCE, TERRITORIAL WATERS, INFORMATION EXCHANGE, NAVAL SHIPS, FISHING AGREEMENTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 24 apr 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978FREETO01299  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780174-0444  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** FREETOWN  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t19780425/aaaaauvo.tel  
**Line Count:** 149  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** d5d5c9a8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 78 STATE 90967  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 28 apr 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2873566  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SIERRA LEONE OFFSHORE FISHING  
**TAGS:** EFIS, PLOS, PEPR, EWWT, MARR, MASS, PBOR, SL  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/d5d5c9a8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014